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The Causes of the Recent Mexican Conflict.

The Mexican "war," now happily closed, at least for the time, has puzzled many of us. It is difficult to believe that the chief cause of it was, as so many seem to assume, the long continuance in the presidency of Porfirio Diaz and the despotism now declared to have been exercised by him. Diaz was until quite recently generally reputed to be a statesman of a high order, who had done a great deal for the development and prosperity of his country. He was term after term re-elected to the presidency, we were told, because he was the one man in Mexico whom the people believed capable of administering the affairs of the Republic in a wise and satisfactory manner. One wonders why the people did not choose another man at the last election, if the old president had become really obnoxious to them. They certainly had it in their power to do so if they had exercised their right to vote, which they seem usually to neglect.

President Diaz, of course, remained too long in office, and it may be conceded that the dissatisfaction arising therefrom was one of the causes of the recent uprising; or, at any rate, that it furnished the excuse therefor. Mexico (and every other republic) ought to make it impossible for such a thing to occur again, if she desires to have hereafter undisturbed peace within her borders. In a government of the people, if it is expected to be stable and peaceful, everything resembling absolutism should be excluded. Absolutism and peace, real and abiding peace, are mutually exclusive.

What effects investments of citizens of this country and others in Mexico had in bringing on the uprising it is not easy to figure out. It has been reported that many Mexicans have been deeply affected by the manner in which foreign capitalists have been getting control of all the best sources of wealth in their country, and the way in which President Diaz, with much favoritism, dealt out concessions to them. This disaffection was perhaps more serious than was generally known, and it seems to have been on this account that the United States army of 20,000 men was mobilized by President Taft on the border, with a view of protecting the lives and property of our citizens beyond the border in case of possible attacks upon them, and not with the remotest view of any aggression upon Mexican territory. It is practically certain that it was the selfish and inconsiderate conduct of these Diaz-favored exploiters of Mexican resources, rather than the mere fact that the investments were from abroad, that was responsible, in considerable measure, for the insurrection. If it is proper for our government to hasten to protect the lives and property of its citizens engaged in enterprises in foreign countries, ought it not to try to find some way of teaching these wealth-hunters to conduct themselves at all times like gentlemen, with regard for the rights and national characteristics of the native citizens of the country? The interests of peace certainly suggest this, and statesmanship may possibly find a new and useful field in this direction by and by.

Finally, a part of the cause of the Mexican "war" is undoubtedly to be found in the spirit of selfish ambition and adventure which, though now rapidly passing away, has played such an unfortunate part in the past in so many of the Latin-American republics. The leaders of the Mexican *insurrectos* have given not a few evidences that this spirit is not yet wholly dead in Mexico, as we had all hoped. For this cause of war, civil or international, there is no cure but time and the educative and moralizing effects of the many forces which are fast eliminating